

Assemblyman **PAUL KORETZ**

Forty-second Assembly District

proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Koretz Proposes a "First in the Nation" Fee on Bullets

AB 602 will enact a ten-cent fee on each bullet sold in the state to help fund the cost of treating firearm injuries

(Sacramento) – Stating that gun violence is straining our already overburdened public health care system, Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) introduced legislation this week that would help fund emergency room and trauma care by placing a fee on ammunition sold in the state.

The legislation, Assembly Bill 602, would enact a modest ten-cent fee on each bullet sold at the retail level. Revenue raised through this fee would be deposited in a special Trauma Center Fund to reimburse emergency service providers for the cost of treating firearm injuries in the state.

"Gun violence is at an epidemic level," said Koretz. "Nearly 10,000 Californians a year require emergency medical care for gunshot wounds, at an estimated cost of \$17,000 per patient. Since many gunshot victims do not have health insurance, the cost of this uncompensated care is largely borne by California hospitals, and ultimately the taxpayer.

"Yet, there continues to be a huge disconnect between gun violence and the medical community that is left dealing with the aftermath of this carnage," noted Koretz.

The California Medical Association (CMA) reports 82% of all emergency departments are operating at a financial loss. Since 1990 more than 60 hospital emergency departments have closed.

In Los Angeles County alone, the medical cost for treating non-fatal firearm injuries was \$100 million last year—most of which was for unreimbursed care.

"AB 602 will stop this hemorrhaging of red ink by creating a funding stream that recognizes the causal relationship between gunshot injuries and emergency medical treatment," Koretz concluded.

The bill will likely be heard in the Assembly Health Committee in late March or early April.

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